THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • FRIDAY • MARCH 31, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 38 • LATE CITY EDITION

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AJAY BANGA POISED TO BECOME WORLD BANK CHIEF UNOPPOSED

The Indian-American business leader is the only candidate as no country has proposed another candidate for the post of World Bank president. The World Bank on Wednesday closed a month-long window for nominations for its next president, with no alternatives announced to 63-year-old Banga. He currently serves as vice-chairman at General Atlantic. The bank's board is expected to announce the next steps in its selection process on Thursday, with a view to confirming Banga by early May

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'Dahi' label out as food safety regulator blinks

FSSAI now okay with curd and regional name after Stalin, other leaders condemn order

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chennai/Bengaluru

WITH a language and political storm building up in the run up to the Karnataka elections following a fiat to label curd packets by their Hindi term *dahi*, the national food safety regulator on Thursday did a sharp U-turn and withdrew its order.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) blinked after Chief Minister M K Stalin and other political leaders condemned the order, terming it an attempt to impose Hindi.

It said the order has been revised following representations from various quarters.

The *dahi* directive was issued by the FSSAI on March 10 to the Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers Federation (KMF), Bengaluru Rural and Ramanagara District Cooperative Milk Producers Societies Union Ltd, Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers Federation (Aavin) and Hatsun Agro Products Ltd. In its order to Aavin, the FSSAI had asked it to label its curd sachets as *dahi* (*thayir*) instead of curd (*thayir*). Aavin refused to do so.

The March 10 directive had drawn flak from JD(S) leader

Picture for representation

H D Kumaraswamy and even TN BJP president Annamalai, who is also his party's Karnataka's election in-charge.

The food safety and standards (food products standards and food additives) regulations of 2011 mandate the use of *dahi* to distinguish between dairy and non-dairy products. "It was mandated to avoid non-dairy products being labelled as curd. Therefore, milk cooperative federations such as Aavin were asked to include *dahi* on their curd packets. That order has now been revoked," explained an official. However, an Aavin official has stated that there was no rationale on using the Hindi term.

Now, 'Curd (dahi)' in Hindi or 'Curd (*mosaru*) in Kannada, 'Curd (*thayir*)' in Tamil, 'Curd (*perugu*)' in Telugu can be used, the FSSAI said in a statement.

Rescue workers pull out a devotee from the step well of Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple in Indore on Thursday | PTI

14 killed as roof of well caves in at Indore temple

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bhopal

AT least 14 devotees, including 11 women and a child, were killed after the roof of a step well caved in at the private trust-managed Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, on Thursday. The tragedy occurred at around 12 noon when a 'havan' (fire ritual) was being performed on the occasion of Ramnavami on the concrete roof of the step well.

"Twelve bodies were retrieved during rescue operations, which continued till late evening. Two of the 19 devotees who were rescued died at the hospital later. Four are battling for life in the ICU," a senior Indore police official said.

Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan ordered a magisterial probe into the incident and announced ₹5 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased, besides ₹50,000 each to the injured, whose treatment will be funded by the government.

Besides, an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each would be given to the next of kin of each deceased from the PM National Relief Fund, while ₹50,000 would be given to each of the injured from the same fund.

The concrete slab roof of the step well on which the haven was performed was not strong enough to carry the weight of 30-40 people. The platform collapsed suddenly, throwing the devotees standing on it down the 40 ft deep step-well, containing up to 9 ft water.

TEMPLE BUILT ON ENCROACHED LAND?

Local residents say the tragedy could have been avoided had authorities acted against encroachments of the garden-park at Sneh Nagar colony. The Beleshwar temple was built on encroached land, they allege

H-1B visa

Relief for foreign workers

A judge in the US has ruled that spouses of H-1B visa holders can work in the country | P10

Show time, whistle podu!

With the 16th edition of the Indian Premier League beginning in Ahmedabad on Friday, a look at some of the tournament's main talking points

Chennai Super Kings players leave for training at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Thursday | CSK

NEW RULES

Both Rishabh Pant and M S Dhoni have picked up fights with on-field umpires because of seemingly questionable no-ball calls. From this year, teams can take a DRS over wides/no balls too. Besides, there is a Impact Player (essentially a substitute) rule and option of naming playing the XI after the toss

WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

With the final of the World Test Championship less than two weeks after the final of the IPL, some of the Test regulars could be rotated out of their respective franchises due to workload concerns

INJURIES: The likes of Jasprit Bumrah, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Jonny Bairstow, Lockie Ferguson and Josh Hazlewood are either out or will miss a part of the season because of injuries | P13

Dhoni's final season?

One of the successful IPL captains, Dhoni, hasn't announced anything officially yet. But there is a feeling that this is set to be Chennai captain's final year as a playing member. Having lit up many a year in the famous yellow jersey, can he inspire the franchise to a fifth title?

Today's match: Gujarat Titans vs Chennai Super Kings, 7.30 PM

IN VARUNA, VIJAYENDRA MAY CONTEST AGAINST SIDDU: BSY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

FORMER chief minister BS Yediyurappa has hinted that his son and BJP state vice-president BY Vijayendra might contest the assembly elections from Varuna constituency in Mysuru district against former CM and senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah.

Yediyurappa told reporters here on Thursday that a discussion in this regard is on. "Siddaramaiah does not know that the ground he is standing on is collapsing. I feel it will not be easy for Siddaramaiah to win from Varuna constituency this time. We will field a strong candidate against him. We will give him a tough fight," he said.

Asked if the BJP will field Vijayendra from Shikaripura, he said leaders of the party will take a decision on it. "We will see what best we can do," he added.

A senior BJP leader told The New Indian Express that a section of party leaders and workers want Vijayendra to contest from Varuna. "There has been no formal discussion in this regard in the state. But leaders in Delhi might be keen on it," the leader said.

Some BJP leaders termed it a speculation as BJP high command may not allow Yediyurappa's son to contest from two constituencies at a time. Vijayendra is said to be keen on contesting from Yediyurappa's Shikaripura constituency.

He has already finished a tour of the constituency. From April 2, he will be touring again and meeting voters and the party workers. Yediyurappa is also in favour of Vijayendra contesting from Shikaripura. P4

EXPRESS READ

Pope hospitalised, condition stable

Rome: The condition of Pope Francis, 86, who was hospitalised on Wednesday with a respiratory infection, is stable, the Vatican said on Thursday. He would remain in hospital for a few more days, it added. His hospitalisation was the first since Francis had 33 cm of his colon removed in 2021 | P11

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE

INDULGE

38 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

POLL MALPRACTICE

T'kuru Rural MLA's election declared void

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE High Court of Karnataka on Thursday declared the election of JDS MLA DC Gowrishankar from Tumakuru Rural constituency in 2018 as void for poll malpractice.

However, the court stayed the operation of the verdict for 30 days to enable Gowrishankar to file an appeal before the Supreme Court, considering the request made by his counsel.

The counsel had appealed to the court that disqualification would happen automatically immediately after the declaration of his election as void. This would affect Gowrishankar's political career as he desires to contest 2023 assembly elections.

Justice S Sunil Dutt Yadav pronounced the judgment through video conferencing. The order was reserved after hearing the parties by Kalaburagi Bench by partly allowing the election petition filed by defeated BJP candidate B Suresh Gowda. CONTINUED ON: P7

EXPRESS INTAKE

BSY: BJP will retain power in Karnataka | P4

AIADMK-BJP ties will continue for LS polls: EPS | P7

Slew of space projects lined up this year | P10

Clashes break out during Ramanavami in Bengal | P10

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